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## PROHIBITION.

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WHETHER or not the general public have a right to prohibit the manufacture and sale of an article used from the time Noah planted the vine and made wine therefrom, and made a spectacle of himself, is a very peculiar question. Intoxicating liquors have been, from time immemorial, in common use, in all countries, civilized and barbarous, and to prohibit their use by law is a startling invasion of what a great many people consider their rights. The universality of the custom is a point against prohibition. It is a people very low down in the scale of intelligence who have not invented quick processes for getting drunk.

Possibly the opponents of prohibition may be right. Liquor makes a complete change in a man, and when the average man examines himself closely, he may be pardoned for a strong desire to be something else.

It is probable that if the liquor interest had confined itself to the old-fashioned ways of dealing in stimulants, there never would have been any demand for prohibition. In the old days, the spirit or beer shop was established in compliance with an existing demand. Everybody drank, more or less, and so the landlord established his place, and sold to those who came to it of their own will. He had his regular customers who came in for their morning sustainer, their eleven-o'clock soother, their before-dinner appetizer, and, in the evening, after the day's labor was over, these same customers made a little club and boozed to their heart's content. They sang songs in a more or less maudlin condition, their musical efforts being mostly in praise of the liquor they were consuming. They sang—

“ See how it sparkles,  
This drink divine,”

or,

“ Landlord, fill the flowing bowl,  
Until it doth run over,  
For to-night we'll merry, merry be,  
For to-night we'll merry, merry be,  
For to-night we'll merry, merry be,  
And to-morrow we'll get sober.”



It was all very pleasant that night, but the getting sober on the morrow ! Why is it that no song-writer has ever written a bass solo, of the horribly lugubrious style, delineating the getting sober ? Why did not the lamented Mr. Dickens describe Dick Swiveller getting sober in the morning, as a fitting companion to his wonderful description of Mr. Swiveller's getting drunk at night ? The aching head and torn-up nerves should have their poet as well as the process producing those terrors.

The thirty-years-ago sellers of stimulants never made efforts to extend their business ; they merely sold to those who came for drink, and who conducted themselves with as much decency as liquor permits, while boozing. Had this continued there never would have been a movement for prohibition that would have had the strength of a straw.

But the nature of the business has changed entirely within thirty years. The introduction of lager-beer opened a field for money-making so illimitable as to stimulate the cupidity of the more eager seekers after money. Lager-beer was originally a seductive fluid, a mild-mannered demon, as innocent in appearance as spring water, and as beautiful. There are but few things on earth more beautiful than lager-beer. The rich color in the glass, the liquid itself as clear as water, with its delicate amber tint, surmounted with the creamy foam overtopping it, is a very pretty sight, and one which appeals strongly to the lust of the eye. And then its taste ! The delicate, sweetish bitter is wonderfully grateful, and, when cold as ice, the taste lingers lovingly on the palate, the warmth cheers the stomach, and it is as refreshing a drink as man could wish. And in justice it must be said that the lager-beer of thirty years ago was comparatively harmless. Then it was made of nothing but malt and hops, it was "laid" for nearly a year until it had undergone all the fermentations, and it could be taken, in moderate quantities, safely. The percentage of alcohol in it was much less than now, for reasons which will be given hereafter.

The new drink which the German brewers introduced made rapid progress in public favor. The temperance advocates of that day looked upon it without hostility, for they preferred that men should drink the mild lager rather than the more fiery whisky or rum. Therefore its use was rather encouraged than discouraged.

The brewers saw in this their opportunity. They built great



breweries, some of them with a capacity going a long way up into the hundreds of thousands of barrels per annum, which was not to be wondered at, as the profit on each barrel was from \$1.50 to \$2.

Then came the very important question, how was this great volume of beer to be sold? These acute men were not long in solving that problem. They took their good hard dollars and established everywhere what is now known as the "beer saloon." They found them conscienceless creatures, with neither morals nor decency, who never had money enough to pay for a meal of victuals, hang-dog fellows with long mustaches, and trousers chewed off at the heels, with dirty neckties to hide still more dirty shirts, paper-collar twice-turned abominations, who would be thieves but for the lack of courage, the fellows who crawl between heaven and earth, living, the good Lord who permits them only knows how. They took this class of persons and rented for them each a room or two, and put in a counter, some round pine tables and cheap chairs; they supplemented a cheap pool-table and a few packs of cards, and put in behind the bar a keg of beer, a few bottles of whisky, and some glasses, and set them to work, perfectly equipped devil's missionaries.

How could they afford to trust this property with such men? Nothing could be more safe. They did not sell it—it remained their property, all there was of it. The keeper was compelled to sign an agreement to sell so many kegs of their beer a day, as the condition of enjoying the use of the place. Of course, the beer had to be paid for on delivery, so all the capital required was the price of one small keg, which amounted to from \$2 to \$2.50. In most cases the poor wretch did not have this trifling amount, and the brewer was forced to give him the first keg on credit. But as there are one hundred glasses of beer in a quarter barrel, and as each glass brings five cents, the debt was always a safe one.

Now comes the point. This poor devil, this tool of the brewer, has to sell so much beer a day to keep his place. He has to pay the rent of the "saloon," for the brewer either owns it or is responsible for it, and also he must pay for so much beer per diem.

This new system changed the entire nature of the business. The retailer is no longer the quiet man engaged in a half-disreputable business (for, in its best estate, liquor selling has never been



counted a respectable trade), but he is a missionary for the diffusion of alcohol, and an urgent, indefatigable fastener of the alcoholic appetite upon just as many as he can get his unclean hands upon. He goes out in search of customers, and by his efforts liquor is no longer a passive nuisance, but an active, aggressive evil.

How does he do it? He has a thousand ways. He makes his rooms as pleasant as possible; he takes the daily newspapers, which are free to his customers; he hangs cheap but attractive pictures upon his walls—always of a demoralizing nature, for his business is to demoralize; he provides games of chance and skill for his customers, the stake being always beer; he invites workingmen to sit in his place, where there is a warm stove in the winter, and artificially cooled air in the summer; he spreads a cheap lunch which is free to all comers, the viands being invariably thirst-provoking, and all this sort of thing.

Now the workingman who comes into this place may have before, on occasion, taken a glass of beer, when he happened to be in the way of it, but he had no especial appetite for it, and no regular craving. Before the opening of this place in his neighborhood, he went to his home sober, and spent his evenings with his family, as a decent workingman should, and there was always bread and meat in his larder, and his wife and children were decently and comfortably clad. For the purpose of meeting his mates and discussing the current topics of the day, and for the unhealthy pleasure of playing games, he becomes very quickly habituated to frequenting the saloon, and, of course, takes his glass of beer. He must do this, for he is too proud to enjoy the facilities of the place without making some return. Sociability being the chief attraction, he is invited to drink by the other frequenters, his sense of liberality compels him to reciprocate, and so he, who dropped in for one glass, goes out with a dozen under his belt, comfortably drunk. He didn't mean to, but custom, the custom of the place, most artfully devised, forced him into it. He goes home drunk every night, after a month or two of it.

The effect of the alcohol poison is not well enough understood. No man can touch it without fastening upon himself a craving for more. This is a physiological law which is fixed and certain. The man who comes to stopping at a place of this kind every night and taking one glass, within a week finds a half-dozen necessary. And



the seller helps him along the downward road as rapidly as possible. There is always upon the counter a plate of picked codfish, or red herrings cut into proper lengths, or pretzels covered with salt, all thirst-provokers, and they actually put salt into the beer, that the desire for the pleasant liquor may be increased. Beer becomes a necessity to him before he is aware of it, and his fate is fixed. The seller can count upon so much a day from him as certainly as though he had it in his till.

And this is not all, by any means. Lager-beer originally contained only three or four per cent. of alcohol, but it now contains ten and twelve per cent. The original beer did not make drunkards fast enough. It took too long a time to fix the habit so as to make the victim profitable. Hence they threw in glucose to make more alcohol, and all sorts of cheap drugs of the maddening kind, that the drinker might be bound hand and foot, and put into their possession in an absolutely helpless condition as soon as possible. It was not enough to make a beer-drinker of him—to get the largest profit it became necessary to *make a drunkard of him*. It resulted as anticipated. The beer-drunkard is the worst drunkard in the world, and his chains are the heaviest and strongest.

A more infernal infernalism was never devised, and if it does not call for some sort of law nothing does.

But it does not stop here. Men are not the only victims. There are boys in the neighborhood, striplings from thirteen to sixteen. The agent of the brewers arranges his trap for them. They have no money, so he gives them credit. He has a room for them secure from observation, in which they may play cards, or pool, or other forms of billiards; all for beer, of course.

When the account swells to a sufficient amount he demands payment. The alarmed boy cannot pay. He frightens him with threats of appealing to his parents, and, when the boy is sufficiently ground down, he suggests that his mother has linen, his elder brother a revolver, his father books, and his sister jewelry, and he gives him the name of a pawnbroker who will advance him all the money he wants, on articles of this kind. The frightened boy jumps at this easy escape, goods are missed from the house, servant girls are discharged for theft, and the thing goes on until the boy becomes a confirmed thief, and so bold in his operations that discovery is made.

Whether he finally gets to the House of Correction or not, he is



a beer-sodden wreck before he is eighteen, and is the bond-slave of the drink-fiend forever.

The vast brewing establishments of Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Toledo and Rochester have millions invested in this business, and their success in the introduction of their beer may be measured by their wealth. They are the richest corporations in the country, and no instances are known where, with fair business management, they have not amassed enormous fortunes.

They keep energetic men traveling all the time establishing saloons. In the city of Toledo, with 90,000 population, they have 800, and the number is constantly and rapidly increasing. A corporation cannot break ground in the suburbs for a factory, that the brewer's agent is not there to purchase a lot upon which to erect a saloon, and, the moment an addition to the city is platted, a saloon is the first building that goes up. They know every workingman, and the wages he gets, and they demand their share of it, and generally get it.

Did they confine their operation to the cities, it would not be so bad, but they do not. They have invaded the country, and there is scarcely a hamlet or cross-roads in which they are not represented. With millions of capital, with an energy that is wonderful, with all the zeal that cupidity inspires and feeds, they are everywhere. There is not a family that they do not threaten, nor one that is outside their influence.

It is this aggressive feature of the trade which has awakened a demand for the interposition of the law to prohibit, instead of restraining. Heavy taxation of the traffic has no effect, for the profits of the business are so great that no taxation has ever been reached that they could not laugh at. The profit on beer is enormous, and they have a safeguard against taxation in this, that they make their own prices and they have possession of their customers. Should a tax upon beer be made so great that the seller should be compelled to double the price, it would make no difference in sales to his regular customers. They must and will have it.

“Back and side go bare, go bare,  
And hand and foot go cold,  
But belly, God send thee good ale enough,  
Whether it be new or old.”

This is as true as it was in the days when the song was written.



The wide-spread misery caused by this wholesale poisoning of the masses, the poverty, degradation, ignorance, crime and disease it entails, the increased taxation it has caused, have alarmed the general public, and made some action against it absolutely necessary. In five States, Maine, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, and Georgia, Prohibition is an accomplished fact, and the sentiment in favor of it is rapidly spreading.

There is no doubt in the mind of anybody that, could the trade in alcoholic stimulants be wiped out entirely, the world would be better for it. No one doubts this, and no one questions it. The liquor seller himself admits it, when what sense of decency is left in him prompts him to remove his own children as far from the business which he follows as possible.

The business is, in and of itself, an organized hunt after weak men and children. If a druggist should entice boys into his store and feed them with opium, that, after the habit was fixed, he might make money by selling them the drug, there would be no question as to what the community would do with him. If there should be found no law upon the statute books to meet his case, one would be made immediately. There would be no talk of "personal liberty" in such a case. Wherein is the difference? The beer-shop keeper makes it his business to entice boys and weak men into his place and lures them on to an appetite more destructive than opium. He uses every artifice that his ingenuity can devise to fix the alcohol habit upon them to their destruction and his profit.

But does Prohibition prohibit, and is Prohibition the cure for the evil?

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. I assert that it does, to a sufficient extent to justify the action of the States that have made the experiment, and to encourage those who hope to extend it over all the States. I myself made a tour of Maine, with a view to determining the fact for myself. I explored Portland, the largest city in the State, first. There is liquor sold in Portland, and plenty of it, and yet Prohibition has been a pronounced, unequivocal success in that city. Prior to the enactment of the Dow law, some thirty years ago, there were three hundred grog shops in the city, its population being about 30,000. It was as drunken a city as any in the country, and its rate of poverty, crime and misery was in exact proportion to the number and extent of its liquor shops. In 1883, when I visited the city, to determine this question



for myself, there were four places only where the law was defied, and liquor sold openly. There were some twenty other places where it was sold secretly, but there were only four open bars, and these four could not be said to be open bars. They were in the sub-cellars under the four principal hotels, and so intricate were the ways to them that a guide was necessary. And when you found them they were sorry places. A room twelve feet long by six in width, a cold, dismal, desolate room, lighted by one gas-light and absolutely without furniture. There was not even a chair to sit upon, only a small bar, behind which were a few bottles of liquors, with the necessary glasses to drink from. Nobody ever penetrated these horrible places except the confirmed drinkers, who must have their poison, and who dare not trust themselves to keep it in their rooms.

So difficult was it to find, and so dismal and discouraging was it when found, that a Boston man with me remarked, "Well, if this isn't Prohibition it comes very close to it. If I had to take all this trouble to get a drink in Boston, and had no more pleasant place than this to drink in, I don't think I should ever drink."

This is the strength of Prohibition. In Portland there are no delightful places fitted up with expensive furniture, no cut glass filled with brilliant liquors, no bars of mahogany with silver railings, no great mirrors on the walls, no luxurious seats upon the floor—nothing of the sort. Drunkenness there has no mantle of luxury thrown over it, and the mask of sociality has been ruthlessly torn from it. If you want to get drunk in Portland you go where the material is, for that purpose, and that only. You must go and find it—it is not trying to find you.

Who have taken the place of these three hundred rum-sellers of thirty years ago? Bakers, shoe-makers, tailors, milliners, and people of that class. There are no houses vacant, and there is a better class of houses than ever. The effect of Prohibition upon the material prosperity of the city is marked. The workingmen own their own houses, their newspapers are better sustained, they have book stores, art stores, and all that sort of thing, which a whisky city of the same population never did sustain; the small trades are all flourishing, and, despite the disadvantages the city labors under by reason of climatic and other conditions, it is one of the most prosperous municipalities in the United States. There was once \$1,500,000 paid annually for rum—that money now goes



into the comforts of life, and there is still a wide margin left for luxuries.

In the country towns of Maine the effect is still more marked. The farmers, when liquor was out of sight, did not want it, their children grew up without knowing the taste of the destroyer, and comfort and prosperity has everywhere taken the place of slovenliness and unthrift.

The best argument I found in Maine for Prohibition was by an editor of a paper in Portland who was, for political reasons, mildly opposed to it. I had a conversation with him which ran something like this :

“Where were you born ?”

“In a village about sixty miles from Bangor.”

“Do you remember the condition of things in your village prior to Prohibition ?”

“Distinctly. There was a vast amount of drunkenness, and consequent disorder and poverty.”

“What was the effect of Prohibition ?”

“It shut up all the rum shops, and practically banished liquor from the village. It became one of the most quiet and prosperous places on the globe.”

“How long did you live in the village after Prohibition ?”

“Eleven years, or until I was twenty-one years of age.”

“Then ?”

“Then I went to Bangor.”

“Do you drink now ?”

“I have never tasted a drop of liquor in my life.”

“Why ?”

“Up to the age of twenty-one I never saw it, and after that I did not care to take on the habit.”

That is all there is in it. If the boys of the country are not exposed to the infernalism, the men are very sure not to be. This man and his schoolmates were saved from rum by the fact that they could not get it until they were old enough to know better. Few men are drunkards who know not the poison till after they are twenty-one. It is the youth that the whisky and beer men want.

Thousands upon thousands of men from other States who are slaves to the drink habit, and so securely held by it that they cannot of their own power resist, go to Maine that they may live



where it is impossible to procure the stuff which makes the meat it feeds on. While liquor can be procured anywhere in Maine, if one chooses to go to the trouble and expense necessary, its procurement is so hedged about with difficulty that the victim who really desires to free himself of his appetite generally succeeds. The help that Prohibition gives him is enough to turn the scale, and he is enabled to let it alone till his restored stomach and new blood give him will-power enough to do something for himself. It makes a difference with the man suffering for want of liquor whether he can step into a bar-room on every corner and take the one drink for present relief, or whether he has to go to as much trouble as would pay off a mortgage on a farm to get it. Hundreds go to Maine for a month or two and come back rejoicing in the thought that they are free. That they do not keep free is owing to the unfortunate fact that they come back to places where liquor is free, and they fall.

It is the great trouble with the rum trade that the producers die off too soon. If a liquor could be invented that would grip mankind as whisky does, and at the same time leave the victim strong to earn money, the trade would be better. But as the appetite not only destroys the power of earning money, but cuts the thread of life very early, new recruits must be made all the time. It is to the youth of their localities that saloon-keepers look for their victims, and they are as sure to find them as they are permitted to exist at all.

My editorial friend is a living example of the uses of Prohibition. The business of selling rum in his neighborhood was killed when he was a boy, and that saved him. There was no grog-seller to hunt him down, and he escaped till he was old enough to know better than to drink at all. Prohibition in Maine saves the youth of Maine.

The experience of Kansas and Iowa has been identical with that of Maine. The prohibitory law is evaded in every possible way. The liquor interest did not at once give up the field, nor has it yet. The saloon was driven out, but its place was taken by secret dives, and by all sorts of devices, some of them very ingenious, to defeat the operation of the law. But the object of Prohibition was attained. The gaudy saloon was driven off the streets, the sale of liquor was made illegal and disreputable, and the penalties for violation were made so severe that the seller dare



not vend except to those whose confirmed appetites make it entirely safe. The boys are saved. No dealer would dare to sell to a boy, much less to go out and hunt for him. And this is exactly what was aimed at by the makers of the law. The confirmed drunkard will have it anyhow, and it makes very little difference whether he has it or not. The thieves, gamblers, and prostitutes will have it, and it makes but little difference how soon liquor wipes them out. But the hunt for boys was at an end. The ghastly mills into whose hoppers were turned boys and girls by the thousands, grinding out daily a doleful grist of prostitutes, thieves, gamblers and paupers, were stopped forever. The law can be and is being evaded to the extent of finishing up the stock on hand, but the supply of new material is cut off. The open saloon is gone, and the coming generation is safe. When the seller dare not sell to boys, the liquor business has a very short life.

This Prohibition has done for Kansas and Iowa, as well as for Maine.

The loss to the country in the amount of money actually paid for intoxicants, and consequently worse than lost, is the least of the evils resulting from it, and consequently the least important reason for Prohibition. A far more important reason is the infernal part it plays in politics. In Toledo, as I have already stated, with 90,000 population, there are 800 whisky and beer shops. The vote of the city is 15,000. Now these shops will average two votes each, the proprietor and one assistant, which makes a total of 1,600. This is a tremendous power, especially as it is wielded by one head. All these men belong to the Liquor Dealers' Association, and all act together. These men have no principles. They are not divided upon tariff, currency and other questions; politics is a part of their business, and their vote is cast as one, that it may be made profitable. They are in a business that everybody looks upon as disreputable; they are in it to make money, and they care not how they make it.

In party contests this power has two points to make. First, to demonstrate that it is a power which is not to be meddled with. No matter whether the candidate aims at the Presidency, a seat in Congress, school directorship, or a park commissionership, the first question the Liquor Dealers' Association asks, is he a temperance man? If he is, the whole power of the organization is turned against him. They want it understood that no one can be



elected to any place of honor or profit without their help. The showing of this power insures them against such troublesome interference as the enactment of early-closing laws, Sunday closing, large taxation, and above all Prohibition. They aim at control of the law-making power as well as the law-executing power. Secondly, they want their places to be made the center of political management, the places where committees meet, and from whence money used in the elections is to be dispensed. From this money they take their toll, as a matter of course. The point with the brewer is to make the brewery the one controlling element in politics, and he has succeeded wonderfully. A politician may safely snub the Church, but he grovels in the dust before the wielder of the beer mallet. He pays no attention to the good classes, but how he bows to the worst! The reason is, the good classes are divided on political and economic questions, while the liquor interest is united solely for one end.

Once more, as to their strength: add to this vote (which is, of itself, enough to turn the scale as parties are now organized) the collateral branches of trade more or less connected with liquor making and selling. The tobacconists, the coopers, the bottlers, and the different kinds of people who supply the saloon trade, are all under this influence, and half as many more can be added to this 1,600, making it 2,400.

But this, large as it is, is the least of it. There is not one of these eight hundred saloons that cannot control four votes besides the two behind the bar, and that comes very close to a full half of all the votes in the city. They control the poor devils who are glad to sell their votes for the beer they can drink, a week or two before an election, and one day after.

Now take this enormous vote, mass the men employed in breweries, the wholesalers and retailers of liquor, the bar-tenders and other assistants directly employed, the collateral branches of trade dependent more or less upon them, and the vast army of hangers-on of the saloons, and it is a power which can and does control the cities of the country. Parties vie with each other in bidding for the saloon vote, nominations are made with sole reference to it, and this unholy power would become the government but for the counteracting influence in the country, which is yet, to some extent, free from its infernal influence.

Think of a government under control of an organization whose



business it is to make criminals and paupers ! Think of a government controlled by the worst, instead of the best citizens ! Think of communities governed by the men whose business it is to make thieves and paupers instead of honest and self-supporting citizens !

The influence of rum in politics is one of the strongest reasons for Prohibition.

Rum-selling is the only business based upon purely physiological science. Drunkenness is not a vice, as the religionists consider it. It is not to be wondered that they so place it, because its results are invariably vicious. The man possessed of the alcohol habit can do nothing good. Whatever is evil in him is intensified, widened and broadened by rum. It destroys his power of making a living, and consequently he becomes a criminal or pauper. If he is lecherous, rum makes him more so, for it destroys the prudence that would keep him somewhere within lines. If he is blood-thirsty by nature, rum makes him a murderer. In short, it increases in all men the desire for doing whatever is bad, and breaks down all the safeguards of self-restraint.

But it is a disease, not a vice. The man who accustoms himself to the use of rum is in the rapids. He diseases his stomach, and in diseasing his stomach breaks down all his will-power. He has really no appetite for liquor, but he wakes from his debauch weak, purposeless, and thoroughly miserable. He knows perfectly well that his wretched condition, mental and physical, is due to rum, and that the only cure for it is total abstinence. He knows that if he will keep away from it a single day, that he will be so recovered that he will be able to abstain longer, but he is so sorely beset that he cannot resist the temptation to take "just one," to sustain him, and he takes it. He ought to know that this one will lead to another, and still another, and then, rejoicing in the temporary strength it has given him, he does not care a straw for anything, and will go on till he is in the same condition he was the night before. He should know this, for he has tried it a hundred times ; but it is one of the peculiarities of a drunkard's life that he cannot tell the truth, either to himself or to any one else. Every man addicted to rum practices upon himself the most absurd self-deception.

And so the poor wretch goes on. His drunks lap over from one day to the other, until, stomach all gone, will-power all gone,



everything that is manly all gone, he gives himself up to the appetite, and goes to the devil by the shortest road.

It is upon the certainty that, the appetite once fixed, it can never be broken, that those in the liquor traffic build, and they have, in the very nature of the connection between the stomach and the mind, a very broad and wide corner-stone. They know that, with the liquor made in this day, all that is necessary for them to acquire a man's estate is to get the habit fixed upon him, and they know, just as well, that to keep their trade good all that is necessary, when a customer dies, is to fasten the appetite upon a fresh boy. They quite understand that the boy will graduate into a spend-thrift, and, finally, a thief and a nuisance, and that they will get everything he can beg, borrow, and steal, but they take him just the same. So much beer will run through him before he dies, and that beer he will manage somehow to pay for. He will not pay his butcher, baker, or tailor, but he does manage to pay for his liquor, and that is all the liquor seller thinks of.

This fact in the make-up of men converts every seller of liquors into a hunter of men and boys. This fact was what changed the lager-beer of the country from three or four per cent. of alcohol to twelve and fourteen. It was to make drunkards faster, to get men and boys under control quicker, to fasten them in three months instead of a year. This is what caused the adulteration of what are known as "hard liquors," and the additional strength put into malt liquors.

If this sort of devilish ingenuity in debauching mankind does not call for the intervention of the law, I know of nothing that does. Certainly this sort of thing would not be tolerated in anything else, and why it should be in this trade, the most gigantic of all the instrumentalities for the dragging down of humanity, is one of the puzzles that good men cannot solve. Possibly the enormous extent of the trade is its protection. The aspiring politicians of the country dread nothing so much as this one power. It is the Warwick in American politics. It makes and unmakes.

I have not referred to the cost, in money, of this traffic to the country, because after a consideration of its horrible effects upon the family and the State, the money question seems trivial. Still, it is worth considering.

There are paid across the bars of this country, for alcoholic stimulants, something near one thousand millions of dollars, an-



nually, for alcohol, and the amount is increasing frightfully. Rum costs the country more than its bread, clothing, schooling, churches, education, and all combined. To illustrate, take one city.

Toledo, with 90,000 population, supports 800 saloons. Each one of these must sell, to live, \$10 worth of liquors each day. This average is very low, for the smallest cannot live upon less trade, and there are many whose daily receipts run up into the hundreds of dollars. It is probable that \$15 per day would be nearer the figure. But at \$10 per day it foots up \$8,000. Multiply this by 365, for mind you they are open nights, days, and Sundays, and you get the appalling sum-total of \$2,920,000 paid for liquors yearly in one small city. The amount is a long way beyond this—probably \$3,500,000 would come nearer the mark.

But this is not all. Add the demoralization of labor consequent upon it—for no man can do a week's work who drinks at all—add to this the cost of the police force, of the pauperism, of the crime not incident but directly chargeable to alcoholization, and the sum-total is something too vast to be put in figures upon paper. Rum is the source direct of 90 per cent. of all the crime and pauperism of the country. To rum may be charged up the cost of the police, the criminal courts, and everything that is costly to the tax-payer. Ninety per cent. of the murders are to be credited to rum, and almost every gallows-tree is rooted in a whisky barrel. Take your jails, your poor-houses, your lunatic asylums, and all the machinery of justice and charity, figure their cost and add it to the amount actually paid for the poison, add to this the loss to the labor of the country through this one agency, and the pocket-nerve receives a very severe shock. All this has been said and written a thousand times, but it cannot be said and written too often.

Every whisky-shop is a school of crime and a never-failing fountain of pauperism. They are stronger than the school and church, and they can pull down more effectually than the other agencies can build up.

Prohibition is a certainty in this country, and that within a very few years. Every civilized nation on earth is looking for some cure for the greatest evil that afflicts the earth. The fact that all countries are trying to "regulate" it, is an admission that it is an evil, and the centuries have demonstrated that there is no sense whatever in trying to regulate an evil. Evils are to be killed, not



regulated. The question of to-day is not whether the individual man shall have the right to poison himself, but whether an organization shall have the right by means of a poison to demoralize mankind for profit. It is a question in which every workingman, every employer, every father and every mother in the country has a direct interest. It is a question whether the law can be made to restrain the criminal-maker, as well as the criminal, to prevent the manufacture of paupers instead of supporting paupers; in short, whether the community has the right to protect its weaker members against organized demoralization.

That communities have this right is the assertion of the Prohibitionists, and who shall say that their position is not impregnable?

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